SID Policy on Communications Management

June 28, 2004

Revision History

REVISION	DATE OF RELEASE	PURPOSE
Initial Draft	June 28, 2004	Initial Release

Approval

CHRISTINE DUNHAM, SID ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Adoption of SID Policy

As part of its ongoing commitment to process improvement and quality within the division, the Systems Integration Division (SID) is adopting this SID Policy on Communications Management. This policy will help clarify and enhance its current practices, and continue to align the organization with the Software Engineering Institute's Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model (SEI's SA-CMM), and ensure compliance with the Department of Finance (DOF) Information Technology Oversight Framework (Budget Letter 03-04, dated 7 February 2003).

1.2   Applicability

[1.2.1][1] This policy shall apply to all SID projects[2] effective the date of this policy. Projects that are in the middle of an SID life cycle process[3] (at the effective date of this policy) are required to demonstrate due diligence in complying with this policy within 30 days, to the degree that it does not jeopardize their ability to satisfy prior project commitments.

[1.2.2] The SID Assistant Director shall consider special situations for non-compliance on a case-by-case basis.

[1.2.3] Projects requesting a waiver from the requirements in this policy shall comply with the Deviation/Waiver Process (iManage SIDdocs #2484).

[1.2.4] Projects that are in the Maintenance and Operations (M&O) life cycle phase shall, at a minimum, assess and report compliance with this policy on an annual basis.

[1.2.5] All other projects shall, at a minimum, assess compliance with this policy at the start of a new life cycle phase.

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[1] Brackets [] are used as a reference designator for explicitly stated policy "shall" requirements. The numbers in the brackets are entered into the SID Compliance Toolbox (iManage SIDdocs #2093 using a policy reference designator (e.g. PM Policy-1.2.1) for ease of verification and traceability to applicable CMM and TOSU requirements.

[2] In this document, SID Projects refer only to projects of a statewide nature (e.g., CWS/CMS, CMIPS, EBT, ISAWS, SFIS, etc.) and not to software release projects that are part of a routine Maintenance and Operations life cycle, or to internally created projects and initiatives.

[3] The SID Best Practices web site defines the typical life cycle for software acquisition projects in the organization. Definitions for each life cycle phase are available at www.bestpractices.cahwnet.gov/processes.htm.

1.3   References

The following references were used in the creation of this policy:

- Information Technology Oversight Framework, Budget Letter 03-04, dated 7 February 2003, Department of Finance – Technology Oversight and Security Unit.

- Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model (SA-CMM), Version 1.02, April 1999, Software Engineering Institute.

- Project Management Body Of Knowledge (PMBOK), 2000, Project Management Institute (PMI).

- SID Policy on Project Management, iManage SIDdocs #2453, 23 February 2004, Systems Integration Division (SID).

- Best Practices Web Site (BPweb), SID, http://www.bestpractices.cahwnet.gov.

  - Glossary and Acronyms, BPweb, SID.

1.4   Compliance Verification

[1.4.1] The SID Best Practices Support Group (BPSG) shall assess compliance to this policy at least annually using the applicable categories of the SID Compliance Assessment Toolbox (iManage SIDdocs #2093). For more information on compliance assessments, refer to the BPSG Project Plan.

1.5   Relationship To Other Policies

This policy is subordinate to the SID Policy on Project Management.

2   POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of SID to follow, adhere to, and implement proven project management best practices in compliance with the SEI CMM methodology, the DOF IT Project Oversight Framework and the PMI PMBOK.

[2.0.1] Project Managers shall comply with the requirements, procedures and processes referenced in this policy document.

[2.0.2] Projects shall comply with existing State of California guidance for identifying and satisfying project and stakeholder communication needs.

2.1   Required Documentation

2.1.1 Communications Management Plan

[2.1.1] Projects shall document their specific approach to communication requirements in the project Communication Management Plan in accordance with the SID Communication Management Template and associated tailoring guidance on the BP website.

[2.1.2] Projects shall update and maintain the Project Communication Management Plan until the project is completed.

[2.1.3] Projects shall establish an Interagency Agreement (IA) with the Project Sponsor in accordance with the guidance provided by the State Administrative Manual (SAM) and the State Contract Manual (SCM).

[2.1.4] Projects shall develop a Governance Plan in accordance with the SID Governance Plan Template (iManage SIDdocs # xx?) and associated tailoring guide.

[2.1.5] Projects shall update and maintain the Governance Plan until the project is completed.

[2.1.6] Projects shall develop and maintain an Issue and Action Item Tracking Process in accordance with the SID Issue and Action Item Tracking Process Template and associated tailoring guidance.

[2.1.7] Projects shall develop and maintain a Dispute Resolution Process in accordance with the SID Dispute Resolution Process Template and associated tailoring guidance.

[2.1.8] Projects shall develop and maintain an Escalation Process in accordance with the SID Escalation Process Template and associated tailoring guidance.

[2.1.9] Projects shall develop and maintain a Problem/Defect Tracking Process in accordance with the SID Problem Tracking Process Template (iManage SIDdocs #xx) and associated tailoring guidance.

[2.1.10] Project shall regularly document and disseminate written project status reports in accordance with SID status report templates and guidance, and state and federal status reporting requirements.

[2.1.11] Documentation related to communication management shall be tailored and revised (as appropriate) to accommodate the differences between SID acquisition life cycle as defined on the BP website.

[2.1.12] Documentation related to communication management (such as the Issue Tracking Process, Escalation Process, etc.) shall be included or referenced in the project Communication Management Plan.

[2.1.13] The status and completion of communication activities shall be documented and reviewed periodically (such as at key project milestones) with the project management team, quality management team, and Project Manager.

[2.1.14] Measurements showing the status of communications and communication effectiveness (e.g. regular stakeholder surveys) shall be documented, tracked and analyzed for trends.

Refer to the individual project's Quality Management Plan for specific metrics.

2.2   Communication Management Roles & Responsibilities

[2.2.1] The Project Manager shall be responsible for implementation of this policy and for all communication management activities, either directly or by overseeing the work of others, including the development and maintenance of the Communication Management Plan.

[2.2.2] The Project Manager shall report status, and communicate and escalate issues, critical problems, and risks to the SID Assistant Director, as necessary, to ensure timely and coordinated resolution of the item(s).

2.3   Communications Management Tools

[2.3.1] Written project communications received or generated by the project shall be retained and stored in the project's library and/or document management tool.

Refer to the project's Document Management Plan for details.

[2.3.2] Project e-mail that document decisions or have pertinent value to the project shall be stored in the project's library and/or document management tool, and retained for historical purposes.

Refer to the project's Document Management Plan for details.

3   COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The requirements for implementing SID's communication strategy are defined below. The major elements of the communication strategy are as follows:

- Communication Planning
- Governance Definition
- Issue and Action Item Tracking
- Dispute Resolution
- Escalation Process
- Problem/Defect Tracking
- Status Reporting
- Performance Review Presentations
- Division-Level Communications

[3.0.1] The Communication Management Plan shall describe or reference the specific processes and procedures that will be used for managing internal and external project communications.

3.1 Communication Planning

[3.1.1] The Communication Management Plan shall describe the project's specific approach to communications both within the project and with organizations external to the project.

[3.1.2] The Communication Management Plan shall describe the regular, periodic communications the project will use to update project staff, the sponsor and stakeholders.

[3.1.3] The effectiveness and frequency of project communications shall be evaluated periodically (such as at key project milestones) by soliciting feedback from users and stakeholders.

[3.1.4] The current state and federal laws and regulations for communication shall be reviewed periodically (such as at key project milestones) to ensure the project remains in compliance with pertinent requirements.

3.2 Governance Definition

[3.2.1] The project shall work with the Project Sponsor to establish an Interagency Agreement that describes the high-level roles, responsibilities, goals and funding approach for the project.

[3.2.2] The Interagency Agreement shall be reviewed and updated annually by the project and Project Sponsor.

[3.2.3] Where appropriate, the project shall establish Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the counties/local offices to detail the specific roles, responsibilities, expectations, and funding approach for project work at the county/local office location(s).

[3.2.4] Each MOU shall be reviewed and updated, as necessary, annually to reflect the current project status, responsibilities, and funding approach.

[3.2.5] The roles, responsibilities, and level of authority for all organizations participating in the project shall be agreed to and documented in a Governance Plan.

[3.2.6] The Governance Plan shall be reviewed and updated annually, and at the beginning of a new SID life cycle phase (as defined on the SID Best Practices website).

3.3 Issue and Action Item Tracking

Issues are defined as project management concerns or needs, which require decisions or resolution. Issues may generate action items to assign specific tasks required for issue resolution. Action items are specific defined tasks (usually related to project

management concerns) assigned to a single individual to be completed within a specific timeframe or deadline.

[3.3.1] Issues found during the project shall be documented, and tracked to resolution and closure in accordance with the project Issue and Action Item Tracking Process. [CMM 2.5.13]

[3.3.2] For each issue and action item, a specific staff member shall be assigned to be responsible for the resolution of the issue and specific deadlines for resolution of the issue shall be recorded. [CMM 6.1.1]

[3.3.3] Where appropriate, the users and stakeholders shall be involved in major project decisions, issue resolution, and risk mitigation/contingencies. [TOSU – 6.4.1.4]

[3.3.4] Project staff shall assist with division-level issue tracking and resolution, as required.

3.4   Dispute Resolution

Dispute resolution involves the formal process of resolving a disagreement regarding a project management and/or contract-related concern.

[3.4.1] The project shall notify the project Legal staff as soon as a dispute is identified.

[3.4.2] Disputes shall be escalated to the next level of management within the required timeframes as specified in the project's Dispute Resolution Process.

The Dispute Resolution Process may feed into the Escalation Process, or may follow a similar process, but with different time frames and participants.

[3.4.3] The Dispute Resolution Process shall clearly identify the individuals or groups ultimately responsible for resolving the dispute.

3.5   Escalation Process

The purpose of the Escalation Process is to raise a problem, issue, action, or deficiency to a higher-level of management for resolution, particularly when resolution cannot be reached at the project level.

[3.5.1] The project Escalation Process shall be included or referenced in the project Communication Management Plan. [TOSU – 6.4.1.3]

[3.5.2] Items shall be escalated to the next level of management within the required timeframes as specified in the project's Escalation Process.

[3.5.3] The Escalation Process shall clearly identify the individuals or groups ultimately responsible for resolving the item.

[3.5.4] Issues and concerns which affect multiple projects or the division as a whole shall be escalated to the division-level Issue Tracking Process.

3.6   Problem/Defect Tracking

Problem tracking involves the analysis, management and resolution of concerns or issues with the automated system and/or system documentation. Typically, a help desk would collect system problems and manage the eventual resolution. Tracking of problems may be the responsibility of the prime contractor or the project.

[3.6.1] Problems shall be documented, managed and tracked to resolution in an automated tool or spreadsheet.

[3.6.2] The originator of the problem report shall be notified of the results of the analysis and resolution.

[3.6.3] The status of problems shall be analyzed and trend analysis performed to determine the rate of problems identified, analyzed and resolved.

[3.6.4] Trend analysis of the problems shall include error detection rates, error density, and root cause analysis, as appropriate.

[3.6.5] Results of the analysis shall be used to identify process improvement opportunities.

3.7   Status Reporting

[3.7.1] The project's functional managers/leads shall report status to the Project Manager on a regular basis (at least monthly) and as needed.

[3.7.2] The Project Manager shall report status to the SID Assistant Director, Project Sponsor, Executive Committee, and key stakeholders on a regular basis (at least monthly) and as needed.   [TOSU – 6.4.1.2]

[3.7.3] Division and project level activities shall be coordinated to the extent possible through the biweekly SID managers meetings. [CMM sort of]

[3.7.4] Regular written status reports to stakeholders shall include the following:

- Status and results of project risks (Refer to the project Risk Mgmt Plan)
- Status and results of escalation topics (escalation process)
- Status and results of disputed topics (dispute resolution process)
- Status and results of issues and action items

[3.7.5] The project team shall coordinate its activities and current status with other organizations and activities supporting the project. [CMM 3.2.07]

This includes other SID projects and other state and local organizations who must interface with the system.

[3.7.6] Changes in direction or changes to commitments shall be documented and communicated to all affected parties in appropriate written status reports. [CMM 2.4.9]

[3.7.7] Critical dependencies shall be discussed with all affected organizations, and appropriate actions and resolution shall be negotiated, managed, and documented in appropriate written status reports. [CMM 3.2.9]

3.8   Performance Review Presentations

[3.8.1] Performance reviews shall be conducted with the project team, Project Manager, user, key stakeholders and SID Assistant Director at least twice a year.

[3.8.2] The project team shall conduct periodic reviews with users and stakeholders to ensure the current and projected needs for the users/stakeholders will be met. [CMM 3.2.10]

[3.8.3] Performance reviews shall include such things as a discussion of the current status, upcoming milestones and decisions, dependencies, pending problems and their resolutions, issues, and risks for the overall project. [CMM 3.4.12]